



Knightly News

Volume 3

March 2009

Number 9

Calendar of Events

Mar 19	Family Social / Blitz Orientation Org Mtg 7:00 PM Church MPR
Mar 21	1st Degree Exemplification 9:00 AM St. Stephen School
Mar 21-22	Christ Renews His Parish
Mar 28	2nd Degree Exemplification (tentative) 9:00 AM St Stephen School
Mar 29	Corporate Communion Mass 8:00 AM
Mar 30-Apr 1	Parish Lenten Mission
Apr 2	Monthly Business Meeting 8:00 PM Church MPR
Apr 4	4th Degree Exemplification - Tampa
Apr 12	Easter
Apr 16-19	Spring Jubilee
Apr 25	1st Degree Exemplification 9:00 AM St Stephen School
May 6	Monthly Business Meeting 8:00 PM Church MPR
May 8	4th Degree Monthly Meeting 6:30 PM
May 9	Respect Life Rosary 5:45 AM
May 10	Mother's Day
May 12	1st Degree Exemplification 7:30 Nativity
May 15	Family Social 6:30 PM Church MPR
May 16	2nd Degree Exemplification—St Stephen's School
May 20	Faith and Morals Meeting—6:30 Church MPR
May 22-24	State Convention—Orlando
Jun 3	Monthly Business Meeting (ELECTION of OFFICERS) 8:00 PM Church MPR
Jun 7	Corporate Communion (tentative) 8:00 AM
Jun 12	4th Degree Monthly Meeting 6:30 PM
Jun 13	Respect Life Rosary 5:45 AM
Jun 17	Faith and Morals Program 6:30 PM Church MPR
Jun 19	Family Social 6:30 PM Church MPR
Jun 20	1st Degree Exemplification 9:00 AM St. Stephen School
Jun 21	Father's Day

Quote of the Month

When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.



Officers

Grand Knight

Julio Alvarez, Jr

Deputy Grand Knight

Chuck Lusky

Chancellor

Jerry Westbrook

Warden

Greg Celestan

Treasurer

John Sepessy

Advocate

Jim Kelly

Recorder

Paul Crescimone

Inside Guard

John Columbia III

Outside Guard

*Dan Laughman
Anthony Giaccone*

Trustees

Three Years- *Rick Hughes, PGK*
Two Years—*Nick Turco, PGK*
One Year-*Ed Milius, PGK*

Field Agents

Thomas P. Cummings III
813-625-2444
Email: Thomas.Cummings@kofc.org

Directors & Chairs

Membership Director

Darin O'Neal

Program Director

Chuck Lusky

Church Committee

Matt Preszler

Community Committee

Herb Swoope

Council Committee

Scott Sheffield

Family Committee

John Montaldo

Youth Committee

Tom Bailey

Degree Team Captain

Rick Hughes

Public Relations

Greg Grambor

RJS Concessions Contact

Julio Alvarez, Jr.

Newsletter Editor

Nick Turco

Columbian Squires Counselors

*Rob Fisher
Tom Bailey*

Resource Links

Council Web Site

www.kofc14084.org

Florida State Council

www.floridastatecouncil.com

Supreme Council:

www.kofc.org



Grand Knight's Report

Julio Alvarez, Jr
Julio Alvarez 662-1845
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To my Brother Knights and your Families:

As another busy month passes by, I once again thank each and every one of you and your families for your participation in the KofC events that have contributed to our Parish and Community. Noteworthy this past month were our support as greeters for the two Confirmation Masses, our very special First Degree Exemplification featuring Father John's joining of the Order, Brother (Sir Knight) Jerry Hoffman's inspiring presentation on our Blessed Mother, a fun-filled 'Mardi Gras' themed Family Pot Luck Social and our leading the first Stations of the Cross. All these events were accomplished with the infectious enthusiasm and dedication for which you have all become well known. I thank each and every participant!

This month we have three very important 'feature' events which I ask you, and where applicable your family, to support. First among these is of course our **Tootsie Roll Drives** which support Handicapped Charities. One event occurs at the Church. This has passed and we did extremely well (\$1766). The second occurs the weekend of 7 -8 March at the Wal-Mart on Bloomingdale Square. Please consider volunteering for at least one of the nine two-hour shifts on either Saturday (8 am through 6 pm) or Sunday (10 am through 6 pm). Next is our **Membership OPEN HOUSE Wine & Cheese Social** on Thursday, March 19 from 7 to 8 pm. This is a very important event for our growth and we would love to see the families there to help demonstrate to potential Candidates and their families the value of being a Knight. **YOUR TASK IS TO INVITE AT LEAST ONE INDIVIDUAL (AND FAMILY) TO OUR OPEN HOUSE.** You don't have to bring a thing except your enthusiasm to welcome potential new members and families into our KofC family. Next is our **First Degree Exemplification** on Sat-

urday, March 21st at the School. We will be conducting an Admissions Committee beginning at 7:30 am so Applicants and Sponsors need to arrive at 7 am. Approved Candidates report at 8 am with their sponsors and the Degree commences at 9 am. Please support your new members by your presence. Finally, we invite each and every member and family to join us for our **Corporate Communion** at the 8 am Mass on Sunday, **March 29th 'FOUNDERS' DAY'** as we celebrate 127 years of the Founding of the Order. Our Color Corps will participate and following Mass, please join with your brother Knights and Families for **Family Breakfast** from 9:30 to 10:30 at the Ruby Tuesday's on Gibsonton Road. We have arranged a very nice breakfast buffet at a great cost to you and your family of \$6 for adults and \$3 for children (minimal age to be determined). To make the most of this, however, the Church Committee will need you to provide numbers of those attending as soon as possible.

As we progress through the season of Lent, we have opted to take a very close look at our Calendar and focus on a few important events, spiritual and social; however, also focusing on maintaining a balance that ensures you spend quality time with your family and concentrate on faith formation. I encourage you and your family to participate in Church events such as Fish Fry's, Stations of the Cross, and the Parish Lenten Mission to name a few. Also, please make it a habit to regularly check our calendar of events which is posted on our website at www.kofc14084.org.

Finally, please remember that our **NEXT BUSINESS MEETING OCCURS ON THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND**, due to the Parish Lenten Mission.

Have a Blessed Month!

Fraternally,
Julio
Grand Knight 14084



Family of the Month ***The Roger Spinelli Family***

For their active involvement in various church and council activities since joining the Knights a few months ago



Knight of the Month ***Shawn Ryan***

For his overall contributions to the Knights especially the upgrades and enhancements he has made to the council's web site



Father of the Month

Congratulations to Matt and Rowena Preszler on the birth of their daughter, Noelle Bree

Keep in our Prayers

- **Terri and SK John Montaldo**, on the passing away of Terri's mother **Mary Ann Villar**
- **SK Jeff Nicholas and his wife Linda**, on the tragic death of **Jeff's brother, Dan**
- **Mara White** who recently died of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. She was **D'Ann Lawrence White's sister-in-law** and **Squire Ian White's aunt and godmother**
- **Brother Knight Richard Mlodzik** who has recently been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and has started chemotherapy
- **Francis Xavier's** mother in law who is suffering with pancreatic cancer
- **Herb Swoope** who continues his recovery from a successful surgery mid-January
- **Ed Slezak's sister, Marianne** who is struggling with lung cancer.
- **Bernie Loughlan** who is dealing with MS
- **Brother Tom Bailey** for his continued recovery.
- All Knights that are in financial distress



Chaplain's Report

Rev Bill Swengros

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My Brothers,



Yesterday I had an appointment with a young couple engaged to be marriage. During the first appointment, I usually try to gain an understanding of where the couple is in their spiritual journey. Faith is an important dimension in every marital

relationship. Studies confirm the wisdom of Fr. Peyton: "Families that pray together, stay together." In fact, couples who are active in their faith, participate in the Mass every weekend, and pray and meditate on the Sacred Scriptures together daily have an incredibly low rate of divorce.

In the case of my new friends, she comes from a devout Catholic family and is trying to live our faith. His father is Jewish and his mother is Catholic. Unfortunately, he was raised with little religious formation.

As we talked, I shared that he should never feel pressure from me, his fiancé, or anyone else to convert and told him of our deep respect for our "elder brothers in faith", the Jewish people. He responded that he hadn't really thought much about converting but after attending our registration meeting last weekend and hearing about our wonderful Knights of Columbus Council, he thought he might convert just to become a Knight. He felt that this was just the type of organization he was looking for – a group of men who are committed to being the difference in the world by their love for their God, family, parish, community, and country.

I was both proud and amazed. Never before have I heard anyone say that he wanted to convert to Catholicism in order to become a Knight. Awesome stuff!

The fact is, every day of our lives, we represent the Knights by all we say, do, and think. The way we carry ourselves, the choices we make, and the way we respond to events around us, reflect on ourselves, our fraternity, and our Church. It is a challenge to think that I may be the only Gospel a co-worker or a neighbor ever reads. It is daunting to think that all of the Catholic Church is judged by my words and actions. Yet it is true.

So what makes the Knights of Columbus so special? There are lots of service organizations in our community which are founded on the best of intentions. The difference is that our fraternity is based in discipleship. We are a Catholic organization, dedicated to loving and serving God through our care for our families, our parish community, our community, and our country. We strive to be the difference by the way we grow in the knowledge and practice of our faith, realizing that the strongest testimony to the Gospel of Christ is often delivered in silence with the sweat of our brow and an outstretched arm.

This is all good news.

As Lent continues to unfold, reflect on how you give witness to our fraternity by the way you live your life.

In His Peace,

Fr. Bill Swengros
Chaplain



Membership Report

Darin O'Neal

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Please congratulate Todd Swoope, Rehben Persaud, Roger Spinelli, Mark Beyers and Rev. John Kennedy Santhiago who became First Degree Knights on February 14, 2009 in the Exemplification held at St. Stephen School.

Brian Swetnan, Steven Bapp, Jim English, Jeff Falanga, Patrick Roach, Matt Shirina, and Ed Sleyzak became full Knights in the Third Degree of our Council on Saturday, February 28, 2009 in the Exemplification held in Lakeland, congratulations to all.

March 21, Saturday

Admissions at 7:30 followed by a First Degree Exemplification at St Stephen School.

Candidates with Sponsors that need to go through the Admissions process report at 7:30 am.

Approved Candidates with Sponsors are expected to arrive no later than **8 am** with observing members arriving no later than 8:50 am. **Dress Code is Casual.** Questions about Admissions should be directed to our Admissions Coordination Team Leader, **Sir Knight Bill Queenan** at Email: admissions@kofc14084.org, Phone: **833-8137**.

Membership Blitz

We had Knights giving out information about our Organization and the Knights last weekend. As a result three men came through our admissions process Wednesday and will attend the 1st Degree 3-21-09.

Please invite someone to our Open House for Wine and Cheese on Thursday the 19th of March.

March 28, (tentative) a second Degree will be held at St Stephen School.

Approved Candidates with Sponsors are expected to arrive no later than 8 am with observing members arriving no later than 8:50 am. **Dress Code is Casual.**

PLEASE CONTINUE TO WORK ON YOUR ADVANCEMENT REQUIREMENTS!

Being a Knight means being involved and learning about our Order, our Principles, and most importantly... learning to better practice our Faith. I encourage each and every one of you, whether working towards a degree or sponsoring a potential Candidate, to make the effort to grow as a Knight by taking an active part in achieving the requirements to advancement in the Order.

Finally, please continue your efforts to build the Council and the Order by recruiting **quality** Catholic Gentlemen with the energy and spirit to make a difference in our Community.

Fraternally,
Darin



Youth Activities

Congratulations to **Kelli Webber** who won the regional Basketball competition shown here receiving the award from District Deputy Tim Manning. She won by 1 shot and will be going to the State competition on March 14th in Orlando





Deputy Grand Knight Report

Chuck Lusky
charles.lusky@verizon.net

Brothers,

It's March Madness, it's Lent, and it's time to help out this weekend with the Tootsie Roll Drive down at our Wal-Mart on Bloomingdale and Bell Shoals. If you have not signed up yet please come by and do some time to help out with this important event. Some brothers who are normally on duty will not be there this year so we will need every one helping out. Julio our Grand Knight is spear heading this effort. Cell 401-7683

Our Blitz Open House will be March 19th. Program Directors please be prepared to talk about your committee. Five minutes max. Fellow brothers please invite fellow friends and candidates to this important Open House.

The Respect Life Team will be car-pooling from church on March 14th at 5:45 AM. Please be at the screened in portico at church to car pool to the All Women's clinic in Tampa.

Chuck Lusky will be heading this up 760-0780.

First Degree from our Blitz will be on Saturday 3/21 at 7:30AM. The degree will begin at 9AM. Come out and support our new brothers.

Corporate Communion will be on Founders Day 3/29. We will celebrate Mass at 8AM with breakfast at Ruby Tuesdays at 9:30 AM. Cost will be cheap and pay at the door. See you there.

Since it's lent please support the Friday fish fry and attend stations there after.

Lastly, have a safe and happy St Patrick's Day. Wear the green!

Sir O'Lusky over and out.

Helping Knights and parishioners in need

Brother Knights,

I am leading an effort to plan an effective mechanism for the council to address the needs of Knights and parishioners who've found themselves among the ranks of the unemployed or are otherwise looking for work in these tough economic times. As the numbers of unemployed swell it becomes increasing difficult to secure opportunities suited to ones skills due to the sheer number of other job seekers. The creation of a truly useful council networking solution and provision of other critical tools such as training on job search strategies, resume writing, and ways to distinguish one's self from the crowd, will strengthen our council and provide leadership for the parish in tough times. Many of the tools and resources are already available so there's not much need to create a solution from the ground up. The goal at present is simply to determine what resources to assemble and how to deploy them.

Ideas on the table at present include the use of a "Linkedin.com" group, a database on the council web site, completion of a council directory, and supplying self-paced training resources such as those offered by career-ministries.com up to and including networking/support group meetings for job seekers. In particular, I'd like input from those who've worked on the directory project. The most critical piece of the puzzle will center on acquiring information on who needs work, what skills they have, and who to connect them with.

I am asking any interested brother who feels he can contribute ideas or direction to this effort to let me If you can contribute, please email me – bhollan4@tampabay.rr.com

Fraternally,
Brian Hollands
(813) 672-4408



In case you missed the events in Connecticut

Shredding the First Amendment in the Constitution State

Remarks of Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson

March 11, 2009 Hartford, Conn.

Legislators here in the Constitution State have declared war on the First Amendment. Make no mistake – the ill-conceived [Bill No. 1098](#) which you have heard so much about is an attack that exclusively targets the Catholic Church. It would strip our bishops and priests of their ability to administer dioceses and parishes. This bill would wrest authority over Church affairs from pastors, bishops and dioceses and instead turn over control to a series of elected boards, explicitly excluding the bishops and pastors from voting. In effect, this bill states we cannot trust our priests and bishops. It is an insult to every priest in the state of Connecticut.

We are here today to say that our priests and bishops should be treated with respect. We are here to say that every person of religious belief in Connecticut should be treated with respect. The bill was written and rushed before committee without even the courtesy of a call to any of Connecticut's Catholic bishops.

We deserve better!

Under a law like this, it is not too much to say that the Catholic Church would no longer be "catholic." Boards – independent of their bishops – could create parishes more unique than universal. Some denominations prefer such a set up, but the point is that every denomination must remain free to choose. For this reason, it is precisely the free exercise of religion that is at stake in this bill. Though this attack is surprising today, it is not unprecedented. Many states, including Connecticut,

once maintained anti-Catholic laws

that shock our modern understanding of religious freedom.

In Connecticut, Catholics were legally forbidden from holding public office, or owning land into the 19th century. In fact, it took the Constitution State nearly three decades after ratification of the U.S. Constitution to grant something resembling First Amendment religious freedom to Catholics. Even then attacks continued. Know-Nothings often tried to restrict the actions of the Catholic Church. One of their favorite tools was "trusteeism" – precisely what Bill 1098 would impose.

There has never been any doubt that government-mandated trusteeism was simply a tool to impose severe, unconstitutional limits on the Catholic Church. Though the stated purpose for this bill is to prevent financial mismanagement of parishes, the bill's sponsors ignore two facts: not only are such incidences incredibly rare, but the Catholic Church has adopted effective measures to prevent a repeat of such situations. And so the bill is not only unconstitutional, it's unnecessary.

The bill's sponsors might consider history's verdict on the Know-Nothings - whose tactics they have now adopted, for these Connecticut politicians are not only on the wrong side of the First Amendment, but on the wrong side of history. It has been more than 150 years





Remarks of Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson (Cont'd)

since a state was misguided enough to attempt such legislation, and for good reason. In 1855, in the state of New York, the Know-Nothings scored a victory with the passage of the Putnam Bill in that state's legislature. This bill forced trusteeism on the Catholic Church, and created serious legal problems for its administration. It also presented the same fiction as the current bill: priests and bishops should focus only on matters of faith. The Putnam Bill was repealed in 1863.

But Bill 1098 turns the clock back more than 150 years. We must not return to the darkest period for religious freedom in our country's history – a time marked by bigotry and intolerance. The bill's sponsors may know nothing about history – but we do and they should! The lesson from the 19th century is that the power to impose structures that grant or take away authority of church leaders at the discretion of government officials is the power to intimidate and ultimately to destroy. As New York's Bishop Hughes said in 1842: "Every religious denomination in this country ... has a right to regulate, according to its own rules, the questions of ecclesiastical discipline pertaining to its Government. Deny this right, and you destroy religious liberty."

If a state can so easily brush aside the First Amendment and tell one church how it must be organized and operated today, it can easily do the same to any other religion tomorrow. Those of us who live in Connecticut should be especially sensitive to our First Amendment liberties. Consider this: Back in 1801, a group of 26 Connecticut churches known as the Danbury Baptist Association wrote to President Thomas Jefferson to ask his help in challenging a state law that established the Congregational Church as the state church of Connecticut. His letter bears directly on the issue we face with Bill 1098. This is what President Jefferson said in his letter:

"Believing with you that religion is a matter

that lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship...I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between church and state."

President Jefferson considered our First Amendment to be an: "expression of the supreme will of the Nation in behalf of the rights of conscience." We call upon Connecticut legislators to stand with Jefferson, and protect our Catholic Church and every Church in Connecticut!

The bill doesn't stand a chance against a court challenge of its constitutionality. But even introducing this Bill sends a dangerous message to all religious leaders that will chill freedom of religion and free speech as religious leaders are forced to consider whether what they say will subject them to government interference and intimidation. How ironic that lawmakers from the "Constitution State," have proposed this archaic measure.

In closing, I would like to say something about all the talk about this bill having been made in response to the concerns of the laity. As the leader of the Knights of Columbus – the largest organization of the laity in the U.S. and Connecticut, let me tell you what we are concerned about:

- We are concerned that our bishops and priests are treated with respect;
- We are concerned that this legislature have procedures that are fair and deliberate and not a rush to judgment;
- We are concerned that our First Amendment religious liberties be protected. •

And may the God who gave us liberty bless the State of Connecticut and the deliberations of this Legislature.